



CITY OF TAUNTON PATHWAYS COMMITTEE

*Taunton City Hall
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*Phillip Duarte
Chair*

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MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING Wednesday, May 1, 2019 @ 7:00pm Municipal Council Chambers ~ Temporary City Hall 141 Oak St. ~ Taunton, MA 02780

Meeting called to order at 7:12pm by Phillip Duarte

Members Present:

Phillip Duarte
Jonathan Gray
Deb Levesque
Will Mendonca
James Dufresne
Bill Napolitano - SRPEDD

Members Not Present:

Madeline Silva
Karen Letendre
Scott Martin
Dick Shafer
Jake McNamara
Heather Rios-Pistoor

Public Input: *None*

Reports:

Update from the Chair

- Resignation of TJ Torres
 - TJ has officially resigned from the Committee. He will be pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Administration and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors. We will undoubtedly continue to interact and work with him in his capacity as the Grants Coordinator for the Office of Economic and Community Development. See resignation letter attached.
- Regional Bike Share Program

- RFP Update
 - There were no proposals submitted in response to SRPEDD's Regional Bike Share Program RFP. Eric Arbeene from SRPEDD reached out to all of the companies who considered applying to ask why they did not submit proposals. The main reason was that the model being sought was not financially feasible for them. This is due to a variety of reasons, including:
 - The rapidly changing nature of the bike share industry
 - There is an increased prevalence of electric-assist bikes and e-scooters due to their higher profit margins vs. traditional push-pedal bikes
 - Vendors are acquiring each other regularly, causing instability in the market
 - The lack of people that would regularly use the bikes
 - The RFP appears to be suited to recreational riders rather than commuters
 - Eric is in the process of reaching out to the communities who signed on to the original RFP to see if there is interest in reissuing an updated RFP. An updated RFP would likely be for e-assist bikes, which would come with similar, if not higher, costs for the docking stations that would need to anchor them and also charge them.
 - We will put this idea on hold for now. There may be potential to do a bike share program in the future by having businesses sponsor docking stations or through grants.

Subcommittee Updates

- Advocacy: None
- Marketing: None
- Outreach:
 - Health and Wellness Summit
 - City Councilor Barry Sanders hosted his first annual Health and Wellness Summit on April 27th from 11am-2pm at Parker Middle School.
 - There were different groups and organizations tabling. There were also several workshops that occurred throughout the timeframe of the event.
 - Phil and Deb tabled at the event.
 - It was a little slow since it was the first year of the event, but the people there were genuinely interested and engaged.
 - Deb made an interactive "quiz" on poster boards for people to take with questions about the trail and the Committee.
 - Feedback from participants included making the event a few weeks earlier in order to avoid all of the events at the beginning of spring and having more advertising in different forms.
 - Councilor Sanders also mentioned that he is working with the School Department to possibly combine the event with Parent University in the future.

- Upcoming Events
 - Friends of the Taunton Pathways, Inc.
 - The nonprofit will be having their annual membership meeting in May (hopefully) or June. Phil will email the details to everyone once they have been finalized.
 - There will also be a Home Plate fundraiser for dinner on July 9th where a percentage of your bill will go to the nonprofit. Phil will email the tickets to everyone once he receives them.

Old Business:

Safe Routes to School

- Spring Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day
 - Omar sent emails to the Principals and Vice Principals at the pilot schools, which are Galligan, Mulcahey, and Parker. The only response received was from the Principal at Chamberlain, which already participates in the program.
 - Phil spoke with Kathy Perry from the School Department at the Health and Wellness Summit and she said that they are hoping to be more actively involved in Safe Routes to School next year since the new administrators will be settled into their positions.

New Business:

Taunton River Trail

- Letter to Law Department
 - Phil sent a letter to Attorney de Abreu requesting that the Law Department take over responsibility of acquiring the easement over 491 and 655 West Water St. in the area of the existing Cobb Brook easement. Phil spoke with Attorney de Abreu and he said he has received the letter and will be looking into it. See the letter to Attorney de Abreu attached.
- TMLP/DPW/BETA Meeting
 - There was a meeting on April 30th with TMLP, DPW, BETA, Stantec, and Brown, Richardson, and Rowe for status updates and further coordination.
 - It appears that the DPW's wastewater discharge project will actually be about five years out. The DPW and BETA are currently waiting for an estuary report to be completed and sent to the EPA in order for them to determine their next steps.
 - Everyone is in agreement that the trail will return to the right-of-way after making its loop around the TMLP plant. In addition, the DPW and BETA have stated that if their work along the right-of-way before the TMLP plant disturbs the trail once that section is built, they will be responsible for reconstructing it.
 - We do not want to wait five years to construct that section of the trail, and it is likely that EEA does not want to either. As a result, we think it is best to explore the possibility of removing that section of the trail from the permitting of the

DPW's wastewater discharge project and instead design and permit the entire trail as a single project. If it were done this way, TMLP could simply put up the funds for the construction of the section that they have committed to construct.

- The letter we received from TMLP in July of 2018 states that "TMLP is willing to fund and construct (excluding all permitting requirements by others) that portion of the trail from the southern edge of the solar field to Cleary-Flood Drive under Option A, in conjunction with the construction of the solar field."
- Phil will discuss this with Imogene from Brown, Richardson, and Rowe in order to determine if we can design and permit the entire trail as a single project. DPW, BETA, and TMLP would have to approve our trail alignment or tell us where to put it in order to ensure that it stays as clear of their projects as possible in order to minimize disturbances of the trail when they complete their projects.

Taunton River Festival

- Walk-Through
 - Phil, Deb, Karen, and Madeline did a walk-through for the historic walk after the last meeting to get a sense of the route and where the best place to discuss each slide of information would be.
- Review of Route
 - Using the information from the walk-through, Deb created a route. It starts at the center of the Weir Riverfront Park, backtracks to the overlook, goes through the park, over the bridge, through the Weir Village Riverfront Park, and back. On the map, Deb has delineated which slides will be discussed at what points.
- Logistics
 - Deb has mailed in the form to reserve our space at the event.
 - The historic walk will likely occur at 12pm and 2pm.
 - Deb will continue to work with Katie to determine if and how to do a self-guided version of the walk.

Announcements:

- Next Meeting:
Wednesday, June 5, 2019 @ 7:00pm
Municipal Council Chambers ~ Temporary City Hall
141 Oak St. ~ Taunton, MA 02780

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm by Phillip Duarte